

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for printing and treating a recording element comprising:
 - a printhead for dispensing a liquid comprising a carrier onto a recording element;
 - a carrier removal station positioned downstream from the printhead, the carrier removal station being adapted to remove a predetermined percentage of carrier present in the recording element; and
 - a converting station positioned downstream from the carrier removal station, wherein the converting station is adapted to increase a durability characteristic of the recording element.
2. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the printhead is a thermal printhead.
3. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the printhead is a piezoelectric printhead.
4. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the printhead is a continuous printhead.
5. The system according to Claim 1, further comprising a recording element source positioned upstream from the printhead.
6. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the system has a desktop footprint dimension.
7. The system according to Claim 1, portions of the system defining a recording element travel path, wherein a second portion of the travel path overlaps a first portion of the travel path.

8. The system according to Claim 7, portions of the system defining a third portion of the travel path, wherein the third portion of the travel path overlaps at least one of the second portion and the first portion.

9. The system according to Claim 1, portions of the system defining a recording element travel path comprising a first portion and a second portion, the first portion of the travel path having a first direction of travel and the second portion of the travel path having a second direction of travel, wherein the first direction of travel is opposite to the second direction of travel.

10. The system according to Claim 9, further comprising a third portion of the travel path having a third direction of travel, wherein the third direction of travel is substantially similar to the first direction of travel.

11. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the printhead is located in a first unit, and the carrier removal station and the converting station are located in a second unit, the first unit being distinct from the second unit.

12. The system according to Claim 11, wherein the first unit is positionable over the second unit.

13. The system according to Claim 12, wherein the second unit has a desktop footprint.

14. The system according to Claim 11, further comprising:
a media handling mechanism positioned between the first unit and the second unit, the media handling mechanism being operable to transfer recording element from the first unit to the second unit.

15. The system according to Claim 1, further comprising:

a controller electrically connected to at least one of the carrier removal station and the converting station.

16. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the printhead, carrier removal station, and the converting station are contained in a single unit.

17. A recording element printing and treating method comprising:
printing a liquid comprising a carrier onto a recording element;
removing a predetermined percentage of carrier present in the recording element; and
increasing a durability characteristic of the recording element, wherein the step of removing the predetermined percentage of carrier is distinct relative to the step of increasing the durability characteristic of the recording element.

18. The method according to Claim 17, wherein the printing, carrier removing, and durability characteristic increasing operations are performed along a continuous recording element travel path.

19. The method according to Claim 17, further comprising:
transferring the recording element to the carrier removing operation after the printing operation is complete.

20. The method according to Claim 19, wherein transferring is accomplished using a mechanical device.

21. The method according to Claim 20, wherein the mechanical device includes a media handling mechanism.

22. The method according to Claim 19, wherein transferring is accomplished by a system user.

23. The method according to Claim 17, wherein removing the predetermined percentage of carrier including applying heat to the recording element.

24. The method according to Claim 17, wherein increasing the durability characteristic of the recording element includes applying pressure to the recording element.

25. The method according to Claim 17, wherein increasing the durability characteristic of the recording element includes applying heat to the recording element.